

referred to former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Amy Cofer, homemaker, and her husband, Joe, U.S. Supreme Court police officer; Katie Powers, senior staff accountant, and Shemetra Washington, human resource

administrator, New Technology Management, Inc.; Guy Donaldson, fruit grower, Orrtanna, PA; and Rex Hammock, president, Hammock Publishing.

**Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report Relating to the
Interdiction of Aircraft Engaged in Illicit Drug Trafficking**
February 19, 2004

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Consistent with the authorities relating to official immunity in the interdiction of aircraft engaged in illicit drug trafficking, (Public Law 107–108, 22 U.S.C. 2291–4), and in order to keep the Congress fully informed, I am providing a report prepared by my Administration. This report includes matters relating to the interdiction of aircraft engaged in illicit drug trafficking.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 20.

**Statement on the Recess Appointment of William H. Pryor, Jr., as a United
States Court of Appeals Circuit Judge**
February 20, 2004

Today I exercised my constitutional authority to appoint William H. Pryor, Jr., to serve on the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit. Bill Pryor has served as the attorney general of Alabama since 1997 and has had a distinguished career as a public servant and practicing attorney. His impressive record demonstrates his devotion to the rule of law and to treating all people equally under the law. He has received widespread bipartisan support from those who know him and know his record. I am proud to name this leading American lawyer to the appellate bench.

Attorney General Pryor was nominated more than 10 months ago but still has not received an up-or-down vote in the Senate.

A bipartisan majority of Senators supports his confirmation. If Attorney General Pryor were given a vote on the floor of the Senate, he would be confirmed. But a minority of Democratic Senators has been using unprecedented obstructionist tactics to prevent him and other qualified nominees from receiving up-or-down votes. Their tactics are inconsistent with the Senate's constitutional responsibility and are hurting our judicial system.

As a result of today's recess appointment, Attorney General Pryor will fill a seat on the Eleventh Circuit that has been designated a judicial emergency. He will perform a valuable service on a court that needs more judges to do its work with the efficiency the American people deserve and

expect. Again I call on those in the Senate who are playing politics with the American judicial system to stop so that my nominees receive the up-or-down votes they deserve.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Notice of Intention to Enter Into a Free Trade Agreement With Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, and Nicaragua
February 20, 2004

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

In accordance with section 2105(a)(1)(A) of the Trade Act of 2002 (the “Trade Act”), I am pleased to notify the Congress of my intent to enter into a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the Governments of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, and Nicaragua (hereinafter “Central America”).

This agreement will create new opportunities for America’s workers, farmers, businesses, and consumers by eliminating barriers in trade with Central America. Our Central American partners have made dramatic progress in transitioning from countries wracked by civil war to peaceful, democratic societies. This agreement will write a new page of our history with Central America—one that depicts sustained engagement in support of democracy, peaceful regional integration, economic opportunity, and hope. This agreement is part of a broader strategy that my Administra-

tion is pursuing to expand economic opportunities and to promote economic growth and prosperity. We are also moving forward with negotiations to integrate the Dominican Republic in our FTA with Central America.

Consistent with the Trade Act, I am sending this notification at least 90 days in advance of signing the United States-Central America FTA. My Administration looks forward to working with the Congress to develop appropriate legislation to approve and implement an historic free trade agreement with Central America.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

The President’s Radio Address
February 21, 2004

Good morning. This week, I traveled to Fort Polk in Louisiana to visit with soldiers and family members who are giving vital service in the war on terror. Fort Polk is home to some of the Army’s oldest and finest units. Since September the 11th, 2001, Fort Polk has trained and deployed more than 10,000 troops to fight the ter-

rorist enemy worldwide, including in Afghanistan and Iraq. Thanks to their bravery and skill, America is waging this fight with focus and determination.

Over the last 29 months, many terrorists have learned the meaning of justice. Nearly two-thirds of Al Qaida’s known leaders have been captured or killed. The terrorists are